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ANALYSIS OF POST-1949 THREATS TO CHINA AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY

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May 1984

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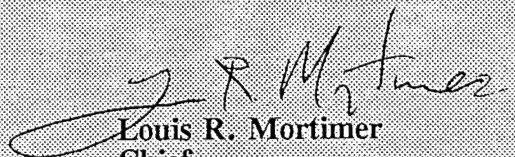
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PREFACE

This study analyzes the impact of post-1949 threats to Chinese security. Emphasis is placed on the major threats perceived by China and general trends and shifts in foreign policy as they relate to these threats. A chronology of threats and Chinese foreign policy for the 1949-84 period is included.

Open source materials were used in the preparation of this study.

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SUMMARY

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Chinese foreign policy has displayed a constant preoccupation with threats. Historical experience and a shared ideology have given Chinese leaders a heightened sensitivity to threats to Chinese sovereignty and national pride.

China has always believed its major threats to be from the Soviet Union, the United States, or both superpowers in "collusion." In the 1950s China joined the Soviet Union in the "Socialist camp" and perceived the United States as its greatest threat. However, increasing dissatisfaction with Soviet aid and a dislike of being subordinate to another country led to friction in the Sino-Soviet alliance. China and the Soviet Union grew further apart during the 1960s, as the PRC's increasingly radical ideology led to international isolation. By 1969 the Sino-Soviet conflict resulted in armed border clashes, and Beijing began to identify its major threat as coming from Moscow.

The slow process of rapprochement with the United States began when China emerged from its self-imposed isolation in the 1970s and became increasingly involved in international affairs. By 1979 the United States and China had established formal diplomatic relations, and China began implementing its "open door" policy of greater economic relations with the outside world. After a brief period of calling for an anti-Soviet front with the United States and Japan, Beijing again reasserted its independence in the 1980s. Although the Soviet Union is still perceived as a greater threat than the United States, Chinese foreign policy now promotes improved relations with both superpowers and solidarity with the Third World.

ANALYSIS OF POST-1949 THREATS TO CHINA AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY

1. BACKGROUND

The founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 ended more than a century of foreign aggression, civil war, and domestic disintegration in China. To a large extent, Chinese nationalism and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) arose in response to the devastation foreign encroachment had wrought on Chinese society. This historical experience of national humiliation has shaped Chinese leaders' perceptions of security since 1949, giving them a heightened sensitivity to threats to Chinese sovereignty and national pride. Since the founding of the PRC, Chinese foreign policy has consistently reflected a preoccupation with threats. In addition, as Marxist-Leninists, Chinese leaders view the current world situation as fundamentally unjust and characterized by a struggle between competing forces. China's view of the world accepts conflict and contradiction as the natural state of international affairs, and considers only the United States and the Soviet Union as major security threats. Threats from other powers, such as the KMT on Taiwan or the Republic of Korea, have almost always involved actual or potential superpower participation.

While the Chinese leaders' underlying sensitivity to threats has remained constant, their perceptions of which actors are causing international conflict and where the threats to Chinese interests lie have changed since 1949. Chinese foreign policy has been modified both in response to these threat perceptions and to domestic considerations. An important but often misunderstood characteristic of Chinese policy is the seemingly contradictory mixture of adherence to principles while retaining flexibility in action, a dichotomy often evident in the difference between Chinese pronouncements on foreign policy matters and actual deeds. Mao Zedong expressed this in 1949: "We should be firm in principle; we should also have all flexibility permissible and necessary for carrying out our principles."¹

2. SINO-SOVIET ALLIANCE, 1949-60

In the immediate post-1949 period, Chinese leaders viewed world events as a competition between the "Socialist and imperialist camps," with a neutral "intermediate zone" in between. The primary national goal at the time was the consolidation of power and beginning of "Socialist construction." For the first half of the 1950s, the major threat faced by China was the political and military threat from the United States. Given the refusal of the United States to recognize the legitimacy of the People's Republic, China's national goal of establishing itself on the international scene made it imperative that China unite with the Soviet Union in the "Socialist camp." Additional threats to Chinese sovereignty, such as a move for independence in Tibet and a continuing concern about resurgent Japanese militarism, added impetus to the need to "lean to one side." The policy became official with the signing in 1950 of the 30-year Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance. China perceived a further threat from the United States as Washington increased its support to Taiwan throughout the 1950s. Additionally, when Chinese forces entered the Korean War, the United States and China faced each other across the battlefield as enemies at war.

China received aid and technical assistance from the Soviet Union to aid in its national task of "Socialist construction." By the second half of the 1950s, however, the Sino-Soviet alliance began to show signs of strain. Chinese leadership differed with the Soviet leadership over ideology and the correct Socialist path. Moreover, the fundamental Chinese distaste for being so obviously dependent on another nation widened the rift. Chinese leaders perceived a political threat in Nikita Khrushchev's 1956 speech criticizing Stalin and calling for peaceful coexistence with the United States.

In 1957 the United States placed Matador missiles on Taiwan which the Chinese leadership perceived as a political and military threat overshadowing the threat from the USSR. This perception of threat was intensified by Beijing's unsuccessful 1958 attempt to seize several KMT-held offshore islands; an action which only strengthened the US aid commitment to Taiwan. The KMT regime on Taiwan posed a continuing threat to Chinese sovereignty, a principle Beijing had been unwilling to compromise on in its ambassadorial level talks with the United States in Warsaw in 1955. The direct threat from the United States combined with the indirect threat of Soviet-US reconciliation helped create a more stridently anti-US foreign policy stance in China. In 1957 while visiting Moscow, Mao lauded the successful launching of a Soviet ICBM and Sputnik, predicting that the "East wind prevails over the West wind." In 1958 Mao's tract attacking the United States as a "paper tiger" was published.

By the end of the decade, Chinese dissatisfaction with the Soviets confirmed suspicions that the USSR wanted to keep China in a subordinate position. Soviet proposals in 1958 for establishing a joint naval fleet disillusioned the Chinese. Insufficient Soviet aid led to an attempt to forge a "Chinese-style model" for economic construction, the Great Leap Forward. Sino-Soviet relations further deteriorated when Moscow failed to fully support China in both the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis and the Sino-Indian border conflict in 1959. Although Beijing-Moscow relations did not reach their nadir until the late 1960s, by the end of the 1950s Chinese foreign policy had shifted from the "two camps" theory toward a view of an independent China struggling against both Soviet "revisionism" and US "imperialism."

3. ISOLATION AND RADICALISM, 1961-69

China continued to perceive political and military threats from the United States throughout the 1960s. US economic and military assistance to Taiwan continued and successive US administrations blocked Beijing's admission to the United Nations and refused to recognize Beijing diplomatically, as the political risks of changing American China policy seemed too great. As US involvement in the Vietnam War increased, a US policy of containment of Chinese expansionism evolved which the Chinese perceived as a military and political threat of encirclement. The Chinese saw the US military threat increase when the bombing of North Vietnam came close to the Sino-Vietnamese border and hit Chinese ships in North Vietnamese harbors. China increased its support for Hanoi, but did not enter the conflict directly as in the Korean War.

In 1963 the United States and the Soviet Union made initial steps toward easing the Cold War by signing a partial nuclear test-ban treaty. This confirmed Chinese perceptions that the United States and the Soviet Union were uniting in global collaboration and increased Sino-Soviet discord. By 1964 Mao further

refined his theory of "zones" by dividing the world into two "intermediate zones," one formed by developing nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and one formed by the capitalist nations, with both zones in between the superpowers who were contending for superiority.

In 1964 China heightened its call for "wars of national liberation" in the intermediate zone of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Lin Biao's 1965 essay "Long Live the Victory of People's War" declared China's experience was a model for revolutionary movements all over the world. Although China offered material assistance to insurgent and revolutionary groups in many countries, its limited financial resources meant Chinese support was often moral or propagandistic in nature.

Sino-Soviet relations continued their deterioration throughout the 1960s. In 1966 China broke off party-to-party relations by refusing to attend the 23d CPSU Congress. In addition to perceiving a political threat due to ideological differences with the Soviet Union, China sensed a genuine military threat as incidents along the Sino-Soviet border increased.

Beginning in 1966, the Cultural Revolution brought about the further radicalization of Chinese ideology and extreme domestic disorder. Foreign influences were condemned as corrupt and corrosive. The national goal of "making continuous revolution" raised Chinese sensitivity to external threats to new heights. Radical foreign policy statements led many countries which had recognized the PRC to suspend or break off relations, while China for its part, recalled all but one of its ambassadors.

By the end of the 1960s, China had become extremely isolated internationally. The Chinese leadership perceived a change in the world balance of power, as the United States appeared to be losing the struggle in Vietnam and was preparing to disengage from its involvements in Asia. This decline in the US position reduced its potential as a threat to Chinese interests. Further, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 (the implementation of the Brezhnev Doctrine), and the armed clashes along the Sino-Soviet border in 1969, led China to view its major threat as coming from Moscow, not Washington.

4. INCREASING INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT, 1970-80

The early 1970s saw the perceived decline of political and military threats to China on several fronts. Beginning in 1970 Beijing sought to redress some of the havoc created by Cultural Revolution radicalism by adopting a more moderate stance and resuming diplomatic relations with other countries. Beijing and Taipei competed for recognition, especially among the newly independent nations of Africa. In 1971 the PRC won the political battle for China's seat in the United Nations. This success greatly reduced the threat of international isolation, and led to a modification of China's "national liberation" rhetoric. A more moderate China called for reforms in the international economic order rather than world revolution.

In 1972 perceived threats from the United States and Japan were attenuated most dramatically when US President Richard Nixon and Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka visited Beijing. Both the Shanghai Communique and the China-Japan Joint Communique enabled the parties involved to temporarily overlook unsettled issues such as Taiwan and the Diaoyu Islands in order to achieve a degree of rapprochement.

In the first half of the 1970s, China, displaying a willingness to unite with other countries on the basis of certain principles regardless of their social or political systems, began the call for a worldwide antihegemonism united front. In 1974 Deng Xiaoping further explained Mao's "three worlds" theory in a speech at the United Nations. According to this theory, the two superpowers are engaged in irreconcilable contention for world hegemony, causing turbulence and unrest throughout the world. The countries of the third world (the developing nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America) and the second world (the weaker developed nations) must fight for independence and sovereignty against the superpowers' attempts to control them. While criticizing both superpowers as "vainly seeking world hegemony," Chinese statements during the 1970s became increasingly critical of the Soviet Union, and by 1977 the USSR was deemed the "most dangerous source of world war."

In spite of increased participation in international affairs, for the most part China refrained from economic involvement with other countries. Chinese sensitivity to issues of foreign dependence and national pride continued to preclude direct foreign investment, foreign loans, and the import of consumer goods until the late 1970s. A law permitting joint ventures was passed in 1979 when the reform-minded leadership of Deng Xiaoping put into effect an "open door" policy in order to meet the national goal of economic modernization. However, even in promoting the use of foreign funds and technology, Chinese statements continued to adhere to the principle of "self-reliance." A quotation from Mao is often cited to support this instance of being firm in principle while flexible in practice: "Relying mainly on our own efforts while making external assistance subsidiary."²

The end of the 1970s saw the Soviet threat to China heightened due to a border incident and increased Soviet assistance to Vietnam, especially after the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea. Rather than "containment" by the United States, China now faced the threat of encirclement by the Soviet Union. By 1979 Chinese assessment of the global situation had changed enough to allow for the normalization of diplomatic relations with the United States. Deng Xiaoping and other Chinese leaders began to speak about forming an anti-Soviet united front with the United States, Japan, and Western Europe. Although neither the United States nor China proposed a formal military alliance along the lines of the 1950 Sino-Soviet agreement, the two sides reportedly began certain forms of strategic cooperation, such as a joint surveillance facility in China to monitor Soviet missile tests. In 1980 China joined the West in condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan by breaking off border talks with Moscow and boycotting the Moscow Olympics.

5. INDEPENDENT FOREIGN POLICY, 1981-84

In 1980, Chinese foreign policy shifted toward a more independent position. For a brief period following US-China normalization, Chinese statements called for an anti-Soviet united front. Rhetoric reflected that the Chinese perception of threat was focused on the Soviet Union. China refrained from harsh criticism of the United States, but by late 1981, China again emphasized the correctness of Mao's "three worlds" theory and renewed its critical comments toward the United States. China again views both superpowers as hegemonistic and contending for superiority.

Since 1982, after a period of economic "retrenchment" during which some overly ambitious projects were delayed or cancelled, China again has turned earnestly toward the national goal of economic modernization. With the Sixth Five Year Plan (for 1981-85) adopted by the National People's Congress at the end of 1982, China declared its goal of quadrupling industrial and agricultural production by the year 2000. Chinese statements repeatedly mention that in order to carry out this massive modernization project, China needs a peaceful international environment.

In the 1980s China began reiterating its Marxist-Leninist view of a world in turmoil due to the "hegemonist acts of the strong countries humiliating the weak, rich countries oppressing the poor and big countries bullying the small. . . ." ³ In order to safeguard world peace, China claims to oppose acts of hegemony, aggression, and expansion by whomever they are committed, and says it will "never pose any threat to others." ⁴ The underlying theme in China's foreign policy statements of the early 1980s has been independence--not allying itself exclusively with either superpower.

Chinese statements constantly affirm unity with the Third World, though Beijing does not publicly claim to aspire to Third World leadership. Because of its financial limitations, Chinese economic and military assistance to other countries is usually limited and more symbolic than actually constituting an alternative to aid from the superpowers.

In pursuing its independent foreign policy, Beijing has taken steps to develop a more equidistant triangular relationship by resuming limited contact with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In order to protect Chinese sovereignty and freedom of action while modernizing, Beijing is cultivating friendly relations with all nations regardless of their social or economic differences on the basis of principles of peaceful coexistence. Close relations with capitalist Japan are a prime example of Beijing's nondiscriminatory friendship policy. In a complete reversal from the foreign policy of the Cultural Revolution period, China is now seeking to maintain self-reliance and autonomy, not through isolation, but by diversifying potential sources of support and aid. China also wishes to avoid the pitfalls of becoming overly dependent on one source of support, as it was with the Soviet Union in the 1950s.

China continues to view its major threats as originating from the superpowers. Chinese statements usually call these threats the "obstacles" which impede improved bilateral relations with the United States and the Soviet Union. With the United States, the major "obstacle" or "dark cloud" has been Taiwan. The 1980 election of President Ronald Reagan, who espoused a return to close ties with Taiwan, seemed to threaten the progress US-China relations had achieved. The Taiwan issue came to the fore in 1982 as Beijing vigorously protested Washington's continuing relationship with Taipei. Beijing denounced both US arms sales to Taiwan and the Taiwan Relations Act, even suggesting that US-China relations might be downgraded. The 17 August 1982 Sino-US Joint Communiqué allowed Beijing to reaffirm the principle of its sovereignty over Taiwan, but differing interpretations of the communiqué by the two sides have meant that the Taiwan issue still remains an "obstacle" in the US-China relationship. China continues to protest arms sales to Taiwan and any other actions or statements by the United States which are considered violations of Chinese sovereignty. These protests were less strident in late 1983 and early 1984. At that time, the bilateral relationship showed substantial improvement due to changes in technology transfer policy and high-level reciprocal visits.

Chinese statements cite three "obstacles" to improved Sino-Soviet relations, reflecting Beijing's continuing perception of a threat of Soviet encirclement: the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to China's southwest; Soviet assistance to Vietnamese troops occupying Kampuchea on China's southern flank; and Soviet divisions stationed along the expanse of the Sino-Soviet border, including Mongolia, to the north. Since Moscow claims that these issues involve third parties and are not bilateral, no breakthrough has been reached during the series of Sino-Soviet normalization "consultations" resumed in 1982. Despite the lack of accommodation on these matters of principle, Chinese exchanges with the Soviet Union in trade and cultural spheres have shown definite improvement.

China's foreign policy in 1983 and early 1984 is to maintain independence from both the United States and the Soviet Union in statements on bilateral and international issues, while simultaneously cultivating improved relations with both superpowers. As long as there are no major changes in Soviet aid to Vietnam, the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and Soviet troop deployment along the Sino-Soviet border continues, and the state of relations between Washington and Moscow remains the same, China will persist in perceiving the USSR as its major threat. Chinese relations with Washington will be considerably warmer than relations with Moscow, but Beijing will continue to maintain enough distance to protect its image in the eyes of the Third World and to protect Chinese sovereignty from any acts or statements which seem to violate it.

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1949	Military threat from KMT and French Government in Vietnam	Beijing successfully keeps KMT forces out of Vietnam. Viet Minh launch first successful assault against Saigon forces.	Beijing offers to establish relations with any country willing to recognize the PRC. The "two camps" and "leaning to one side" theories are promoted (as early as 1946 Mao talked about a "vast zone" separating US and USSR); militant rhetoric appears in foreign policy statements. Efforts are made to eliminate Western influence in China.
1950	Political threat from Tibet and India	Beijing reasserts suzerainty over Tibet [Xizang]; India makes concessions.	Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty is signed. Anti-US and anti-Western policies come to the fore with Korean War and Taiwan Strait crises.
1950-51	Political and military threat from US	Beijing's invasion of Taiwan is thwarted by United States. United States confirms long-term political and military support to Taiwan.	China heightens anti-US polemics after being condemned by UN as aggressor in Korea.
1950-53	Military threat from US, UN, and ROK	Protracted conflict in Korea without apparent resolution; long-range presence of Chinese troops and support for DPRK.	
1953	Military threat from US and KMT	President Eisenhower says US 7th Fleet will no longer protect Chinese Communists from KMT attack.	Signing of Korean armistice seen as victory for DPRK and Chinese People's Volunteers. Beijing reluctantly agrees to voluntary repatriation of prisoners of war. In the Chinese view, myth of US invincibility is shattered. China's emphasis on coexistence with the non-Communist world emerges.

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84 (Continued)

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1954	Political threat from US and Southeast Asian nations	Beijing views formation of SEATO by the United States (with Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, and Pakistan as members) as anti-China alliance.	China introduces four-part categorization of global political forces and makes initial effort at eroding bipolar international structure.
1954-55	Political threat from US Military threat from KMT and US	China supports the Communist government in North Vietnam. China's world status is enhanced by its presence at the Geneva conference on Indochina as one of five great powers. Beijing deters US-backed KMT invasion of the mainland. US reasserts support for KMT regime by signing Mutual Defense Treaty. Beijing gains several offshore islands.	Chinese support for Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence is announced.
1955	Political and military threat from US	Sino-US talks continue in Warsaw. China rejects US demand of "renunciation of force" toward Taiwan.	
1955-56	Political threat from Burma	Limited but significant territorial gains on Sino-Burmese border for China. Beijing's image as strong but magnanimous grows. Closer ties develop between Beijing and Rangoon.	China attends Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, and cultivates friendships in the developing world while deemphasizing its revolutionary objectives.
1956	Political threat from USSR	Khrushchev makes speech at CPSU Party Congress proposing peaceful coexistence with US.	Chinese view of Soviet Union as a revisionist and great power chauvinist emerges.

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84 (Continued)

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1957	Military threat from US and KMT	Matador missiles are placed on Taiwan. Mao visits Moscow after USSR launches its first ICBM and its first artificial satellite, Sputnik.	China's moderate, more flexible foreign policy is abandoned. Mao, in Moscow, makes "East wind prevails over West wind" statement, urging a more active anti-US strategy. Mao provides further explanation of his theory on "intermediate zones" (developing and developed worlds in zone between Socialist and imperialist camps) and calls for re-assertion of revolutionary discipline within the Communist Bloc.
1958	Political and military threat from the US and the KMT	Beijing fails to seize the offshore islands of Jinmen and Mazu which remain under KMT control. US commits itself to the defense of the offshore islands. KMT is forced to abandon plans to invade the mainland.	Mao's anti-US "paper tiger" tract ("Bandung Spirit" failed to break the Western alliances in developing world) is published. Crisis in the Taiwan Strait results in increased tension in Sino-Soviet relations due to Moscow's reluctance to aid Beijing. "Revisionism" in Communist Bloc is criticized by Beijing.
	Withdrawal from threat situation	Unilateral withdrawal of Chinese troops from Korea.	
	Political threat from Japan (with KMT participation)	Trade loss for both China and Japan. Loss of Chinese prestige among neutral nations. Hardening of Japan's non-recognition policy leads to the sacrifice of previous gains in Sino-Japanese rapprochement.	China embarks on an independent foreign policy course making an irrevocable break with the bipolar international structure.

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84 (Continued)

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1959	Political and military threat from Tibet [Xizang] (India shows interest)	CPLA suppresses Tibetan rebellion; Beijing retains and increases its control over Tibet [Xizang].	Beijing begins dual adversary political struggle against US "imperialism" and Soviet "revisionism" with an anti-Soviet emphasis.
1959-60	Political and military threat from India	Temporary, de facto settlement of Sino-Indian border with limited territorial gains for China at cost of derogation of Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and loss of Chinese prestige in Third World. Indian disillusionment with Sino-Indian harmony leads to heightened Indian defense preparations.	Onset of Chinese perception of Soviet collaboration with American imperialism against China and renewed fears of an American shift to Asia.
	Political threat from Indonesia	Although the 1955 Dual Nationality Treaty gave political gains to both China and Indonesia, the Indonesian Government took actions in 1959 curtailing the position of the Chinese population in Indonesia. Forty thousand Chinese nationals subsequently returned to China to flee anti-Chinese suppression.	
1960	Political threat from USSR	The withdrawal of Soviet economic assistance results in a tactical retreat and loss of Chinese prestige. Pro-Moscow allies show solidarity though Beijing gains Albania as an ally. Moscow gains a slight edge in the stalemate in Sino-Soviet relations.	

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84 (Continued)

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1960-61	Political threat from Laotian rightists who have US support	Geneva Conference accepts China's demand for a neutral Laos preserving Chinese leverage there. Pathet Lao retains control of Laotian highlands, keeping open supply routes to Vietnam from China.	
1960-62			Rift in Sino-Soviet relations results in two camps reemerging as three. Increased flexibility toward developed, non-Communist nations is exhibited.
1962	Political and military threat from US and KMT Political and military threat from India	Temporary, de facto settlement in Taiwan Strait, without territorial or political gains on either side. US-KMT relations are strained and KMT again is restrained from invasion of the mainland. Sino-Indian border war yields minor territorial gains for China and humiliating defeat for India. Indian defense expenditures are burdened further.	
1963	Political and military threat from USSR	CCP-CPSU talks fail. Chinese fail to discourage signing of US-USSR treaty banning atmospheric nuclear tests. Chen Yi accuses the Soviet Union of provoking more than 5,000 border incidents between 1960-65.	Shift from euphemistic polemics to public acrimony between China and the Soviet Union resulting in a stalemate in their ideological dispute. In the Chinese view, the USSR irrevocably casts its lot with US in global collabor-

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84 (Continued)

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1963 (cont)			ration. Theme of African and Latin American "wars of national liberation" are pushed by Zhou Enlai during his tour of Africa.
1964	Military threat from US and South Vietnam Lessening of the military threat from nuclear powers	Direct and immediate US-China confrontation is avoided in the Gulf of Tonkin, providing the basis for increased US intervention in Vietnam. China conducts its first successful nuclear test.	China recognizes the existence of a polycentric world as Mao further defines his "zone" theory, saying there are two "intermediate zones" (first zone: Asia, Africa, and Latin America; second zone: capitalist nations). Escalation of the Vietnam War is accompanied by China's fervent calls for national liberation movements.
1965	Indirect military threat from US and South Vietnam	US bombs Hanoi.	China denounces the US bombing of Hanoi in the media and increases support for North Vietnam. China is forced to re-define and restrict its criteria of US "aggression." In his essay "Long Live the Victory of People's War," Lin Biao declares Mao's people's war theory has international significance. The call for self-reliance in world revolutions is a prelude to China's forthcoming isolation.

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84 (Continued)

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1965 (cont)	Indirect political threat from India with US, UN, and USSR as participants. Political threat from Indonesia	China supports Pakistan in the Kashmir conflict. The 1966 Tashkent Agreement results in a loss of Chinese prestige, but enhancement of Sino-Pakistani relations. The alleged Chinese-supported coup attempt in Indonesia leads to the suppression of the PKI [Indonesian Communist Party]. Anti-China and anti-overseas Chinese demonstrations occur. China withdraws technicians from Indonesia and thousands of Chinese-Indonesians return to China.	China accuses the Soviet Union of "Khrushchevism without Khrushchev" and banishes the USSR from its united front against imperialism. Sino-Indonesian diplomatic relations are severed in 1967. The Dual Nationality Treaty is abrogated by Indonesia in 1969.
1966-68 1966-69	Political and military threat from USSR	Heightened tension in the Sino-Soviet conflict. The USSR makes numerous diplomatic protests over Red Guard demonstrations at the Soviet Embassy in Beijing. Both sides expel diplomats and students.	Chinese perceive shift of US global strategy to Asia and further progression of the Soviet Union toward capitalism. Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution results in suspension or break in relations with numerous countries with all ambassadors recalled to Beijing except one (in Egypt). Heightened contention with both the United States and Soviet Union, and a profound radicalization of Chinese foreign policy.

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84 (Continued)

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1967			Chinese perception of a Soviet strategic shift to Asia.
1968	Military threat from USSR	China's first formal charge of Soviet violations of the Chinese border is followed by a Soviet denial. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia heightens Beijing-Moscow tension.	The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia makes the USSR an imperialist power in Chinese eyes and signals the disintegration of the unity of the Socialist camp.
1969	Military threat from USSR	Armed clashes along Sino-Soviet border and increased troop levels on both sides. There are mass demonstrations against USSR throughout China and the Chinese Embassy in Moscow is stoned. The Soviet Union calls for the resumption of border talks which have been suspended since 1964.	Significant deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations. Alexi Kosygin meets Zhou Enlai at a planned stopover at Beijing airport en route home from Hanoi. Kosygin and Zhou agree to resume Sino-Soviet border talks.
1970			China lays the groundwork for deeming the Soviet Union a global power. China's successful search for countries willing to break with Taipei (such as Italy and Canada), results in greater diplomatic recognition. Beijing begins emerging from isolation and takes on a more active role in international affairs.
1971	Removal of political threat of worldwide isolation	Beijing wins China's seat in UN.	Attenuation of national liberation war in Chinese statements on the Third World. China deems Soviet Union and United States superpowers.

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84 (Continued)

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1972	Removal of political threat from US	President Nixon visits China; Shanghai Communique signed.	In the Chinese view, Nixon's visit acknowledges the bankruptcy of America's China policy. Beijing begins the call for a worldwide antihegemonism united front. Chinese statements depict the Soviets as the principal enemy of the developing world.
	Removal of political and military threat from Japan	Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka visits China. China and Japan sign Joint Communique normalizing relations.	Threat of Japanese militarism removed with closer China-Japan relations.
1973		US-China rapprochement emerges.	Zhou Enlai announces the official party policy of seeking a broad united front against the superpowers regardless of social or political systems. In the Chinese view, the likelihood of war between China and the Soviet Union is lessened through US-China rapprochement. China notes conclusive shift of super-power contention to Europe.
1974	Political and military threat from South Vietnam (with Taiwan and Philippine involvement)	Successful PRC naval engagement in the South China Sea ousts South Vietnamese forces from part of the Xisha [Paracel] Islands. Taiwan and the Philippines also issue claims to disputed territory in the Xisha [Paracel] and Nansha [Spratly] Islands. After the fall of the Saigon regime, Hanoi renews its claims to the islands, causing tension between the SRV and China.	China frequently states its claims to the Xisha [Paracel] and Nansha [Spratly] Islands. Mao Zedong announces and Deng Xiaoping elucidates the "three worlds" theory that the world is made up of three parts: the first world (the two superpowers, each seeking world hegemony), the third world (developing countries, including China), and the second world (developed countries in between the other two).

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84 (Continued)

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1974 (cont)	Military threat from USSR	A Soviet helicopter crosses the Xinjiang border and is seized by China. Sino-Soviet border talks are suspended. The Soviet helicopter crew is released 2 years later with the Chinese admission that the intrusion was "unintentional."	Chinese suspicion of Soviet intentions continues.
1975	Political and military threat from India	Minor skirmish between Chinese and Indian border guards with casualties only on the Indian side. China reasserts its territorial claims. Dispute in the media later subdued by an agreement to settle their outstanding disputes and normalize relations. Cambodian and Vietnamese victory puts the United States on the defensive.	China announces the end of the "two camp" system and calls for a broad united front against the Soviet Union, the more dangerous superpower. Major impediment to improved US-China relations removed.
1976-77			Mao's and Zhou's foreign policies reaffirmed under Deng Xiaoping's tutelage in the immediate post-Mao era. The USSR is deemed the "most dangerous source of world war" and world war is deemed deferrable through a united front against hegemonism.

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84 (Continued)

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1978	Political threat from Japan	An armed Chinese fishing fleet enters Japanese-controlled waters to claim sovereignty over Diaoyu [Senkaku] Islands. Japanese diplomatic protests result in the decision to defer resolution of the issue following Chinese assurances that such an incident will not recur. China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship is signed.	In the Chinese view, Soviet global strategy shifts to outflanking and encircling Europe through its moves in Asia. US is added to the "antihegemony" united front and Vietnam is deemed a "regional hegemonist." China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship includes statement that neither party will seek hegemony and that both countries oppose hegemonistic efforts "by any other country."
	Military threat from USSR	Soviet helicopters, boats, and troops, allegedly in pursuit of dangerous, armed criminals, intrude into Chinese territory. Beijing demands an apology, resulting in Moscow's statement of regret and admission of error.	
1979	Military threat from Vietnam and USSR	China invades Vietnam in retaliation for past border skirmishes and as a countermeasure to the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea. Soviet aid to and presence in Vietnam increases.	Diplomatic relations are established between the United States and China.
1980	Political and military threat from USSR	As a consequence of the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, China breaks off border talks with the USSR and participates in boycott of Moscow Olympics.	In the Chinese view, Soviet aggression in Afghanistan angers peace-loving countries and peoples of the world.

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84 (Continued)

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1981			<p>In China's opinion, "North-South" dialog falters due to US obstinacy. Reagan's "uncompromising attitude" alters the strategic balance between US and the Soviet Union.</p> <p>Beijing declares Mao's "three worlds" theory is still "correct" and renews its criticism of US as an hegemonistic superpower.</p>
1982			<p>In the Chinese view, Third World countries achieve closer unity in their struggle against hegemonism and colonialism. The Chinese see the Soviets "deeply bogged down" in Afghanistan but showing no signs of retreat in the arms race.</p> <p>Beijing continues to emphasize its policy of equidistance between the superpowers. Zhao Ziyang's trip to Africa emphasizes South-South cooperation toward a goal of economic independence. Beijing denies it pursues Third World leadership.</p>
1983	Military threat from Vietnam	Border skirmishes between China and Vietnam include artillery fire but do not escalate to the scale of the 1979 border war.	Chinese pronouncements place US on a near-par with the Soviet Union as a hegemonistic superpower.

CHRONOLOGY OF THREATS AND CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1949-84 (Continued)

Year	Threat	Event	Foreign Policy Shift
1983 (cont)	<p>Military threat from the USSR</p> <p>Political threat from Mongolia</p>	<p>In US-USSR missile talks, the Soviet Union suggests the possible redeployment of SS-20 missiles from Europe to Asia. Japan and China protest.</p> <p>Massive expulsions of Chinese nationals residing in Mongolia after they reportedly refuse resettlement to the Gobi Desert. China makes indignant protests.</p>	
1984			<p>US-China relations improve with increased US technology transfers and high-level reciprocal visits. No major breakthroughs in a series of Sino-Soviet normalization "consultations," though trade and cultural ties expand.</p>

FOOTNOTES

¹Mao Zedong, Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1968). p. 17.

²Beijing Review, 27 July 1979, p. 9.

³"Premier Zhao on China's Foreign Policy," Beijing Review, 30 January 1984, p. 18.

⁴"China's Stand on Disarmament," China Reconstructs, October 1982, p. 20.